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Northampton County Records in 17th Century.*

The first commissioners who held court in Sept., 1632, were Capt. Wm. Clayborne, Capt. Thos. Graves, Capt. Edmund Scarborough, Obedience Robins, *Gent.*, John Haw, *Gent.*, and Roger Sanders.

1633. Cotton minister complains about not having rec'd his Tythes of tobacco. Those in default had to pay double quantity of corn & tobacco.

1634. Beaver skins first mentioned in payment of debts. Agnes Williams was to pay widow Hollens 12 hens for attending to her in confinement, but the widow sued her for 18 hens. Mr. Burdett & Daniel Cugley owned the first vessel mentioned. Mention of tying by neck & heels as punishment.

At this Court Edward Drew preferred a complaint against Joan Butler for calling his wife a common, carted * * * John Holloway & Wm. Basley said they heard Wm. Butler say these words. It was ordered by the court that Joan Butler should be drawn at the "starne" of a boat or Canoe over King's Creek from the Cowpen to the other side, or else on the next Sabbath day in the time of Divine Service, between the first & second lesson, present herself before the minister and say after him as follows: "I, Joan Butler, do acknowledge to have called Maria Drew a * * * and thereby I confess to have done her manifest wrong. Therefore I desire this Congregation & Maria Drew will forgive me, & that this Congregation will join with me and pray that God may forgive me." John Greene Chirurgeon mentioned. Ferry mentioned at King's Creek. 100 Lbs. of tobacco the fee for preaching a funeral sermon.

1636. The Ship Africa which Capt. Claybourne had in the Susquehana about 1630-1—buying beavers skins from Indians is mentioned. He is spoken of "of Kentish Isle." First certificates recorded of servants brought from England, there were twelve, three of them women—brought by Mr. Chas. Harmer. Good many servants brought about this date. Christopher Bryant

*Abstracts prepared by Mr. Barton H. Wise.

ordered to be whipped for milking good wife's Powell's Cow by stealth.

At a Court held Sept. 14th, 1635, Mr. Cotton, minister, presented an order from James City for the building of a Parsonage House upon the Glebe land, & because there has been no formal Vestry or Vestry men, It is ordered from this day that those underwritten be vestry men, viz: Wm. Cotton, the minister, Thomas Graves, Obedience Robins, John How, Wm. Stone, Wm. Burdett, Wm. Andrews, Alexander Mountney, Edward Drew, Wm. Bedriman, and Stephen Charlton. This was the first vestry, & it was ordered that the first meeting be held upon the feast of St. Michael the Arch Angel, being the 29th of September.

Sept. 29th, 1635, the new vestry met—nine present. It was ordered that a parsonage should be built on the Glebe lands by Christien tide next 40 ft long, & 18 feet wide & 9 ft by the wall platts, a chimney at each end of the house, & upon each side of the chimney a room for a study, the other for a buttery, also a partition near the middle of the house, with an entry, with two doors, the one into the kitchen, the other into the chamber—power given to the church wardens & etc. There was trade at this time with New England.

22nd May, 1636. Vestry meeting decided to fine a vestryman 20 shillings who failed to attend meeting. A Pulpit Cloth, Cushion & Carpet were ordered to be provided, also a bier. It was ordered "that in consequunce of the great distance some of the people live from the church, That all those who live below the Old Plantation should be buried on the land of Wm. Blous, where Wm. Benjamin lives & that they give notice to the Clerk, & get a way for the minister to get there, for neglect of which to be fined" & etc.

The first land probably granted on the sea side was in 1633 on Magoty Bay. In 1636 the first *negro* is mentioned who was brought by John Wilkins along with twenty five servants. A certificate shows Capt. Wm. Clayborne to have been at one time Sec'y of State at James City.

In a difficulty between Mr. Robins & a Mr. Crooks, Crooks said Robins had defamed him. Quoth Robins "I said nothing but what I can prove;" quoth Crooks, "it is a lye & I will

prove myself an honest man;" then quoth Mr. Robins, "pray God it may prove so;" then quoth Mr. Crooks, "you keep a house not fit to give any man's entertainment, & that he would speak his pleasure in that place." The Court ordered Crooks to be tyed neck & heels for half an hour, & make acknowledgment. Mention is made of Lady Dale's cattle trespassing owing to the keeper being off playing ninepins.

1636. First order for an election. People met at the Sheriff's house Feb. 15th & chose John How & Wm. Roper burgesses. They were to have 1500 lbs. Tobacco. Cotton complains constantly about his tithes not being paid.

March 1st, 1637. John Ford has to build pair of stocks for shaking his fist at a constable. Thos. Hunt mentions his rapier. July 3rd, 1637. John How, Commander.

1637. One Kinsman testifies that he heard Thos. Powell say that if John Harvey should come in again he would ruin the country & planters; that it would undo a number of poor men, But the great ones would not be taxed so much for it, for they would up a * * men (translation imperfect) & about a year ago he heard Powell say, that Kings in former times went to see Wars, but this King was fitten for a Lady's lap.

1637. It was ordered by this Court that no freeman, no hired servant, nor any other person or persons, whatsoever, shall depart from the plantation of Accomack without the Assembly license from Capt. Jno. How, Commander of the said Plantation, & if any person or persons shall so depart the said Plantation without such license, they that shall transport themselves or be in any ways assistant in their transportation, shall undergo & suffer such penalty & punishment as shall thereupon be thought fitten & proper.

1638. Nathaniel Littleton was Commander.

Oct. 1638. Mr. Symmons first surveyor mentioned. Cotton rec'd 300 acres of land on Hungar's Creek for himself & 5 servants he had transported. Church wardens empowered to distrain for delinquent tythes & etc. One John for committing fornication had to build a ferry on Old Plantation—other men for offences were "set up by the heels in the stock." Mention of voyage of one Barnaby to N. England, also of Nicholas White to same place.

1640. First sale of a negro recorded—it was from Nathaniel Littleton to Garrett Andrews for 1200 lbs. tobacco. The name of *Northampton* is first mentioned in 1640. Marking of stock was regulated. First deed of land recorded this year—from Edmund Scarborough to Esq. Littleton.

In Sept., 1640, Order came from James City for all patents & bounds of land to be sent to James City. The King's rent of land was one shilling for 50 acres.

1640. First license granted to keep an ordinary—to Anthony Hoskins. Argal Yeardley orders the land his father had taken at Mattawaman Creek to be surveyed by Edmund Scarborough. Argal Yeardley was his father's, Sir George Yeardley's, eldest son & heir. Mentioned 13 negroes Nath'l Littleton had for himself and his father in law Southey. John Tully mentioned as transported by John Custis—& Petter Cropper servant to Mr. Taylor.

It is thought fit & ordered by this Court That Mr. Philip Taylor nor any other person or persons belonging to him, the said Taylor, shall disturb or molest the Indians, formerly seated at Mattawaman Creek, neither for any cause or reason, to clear or work upon the ground, whereon they are now seated, by reason Nath'l Littleton, Argal Yearldy, Capt. Wm. Stone, Mr. Wm. Stone, & Capt. Wm. Roper have taken especial charge of the place, Therefore if the said Indians be displaced of the 2000 acres of Land, which Mr. Taylor doth lay claim to, they can in no wise permit, and furthermore that the plantation of Philip Taylor, cannot be impaired thereby, he being seated on one side of the Creek & they on the other, & not hitherto hath either built on that side the Indians are appointed to dwell on.

June 4th, 1640, the will of Dame Elizabeth Dale written. May 17th, 1641, first Bill of Exchange is recorded in this Court, & was drawn on ——— of Amsterdam, Holland, in favor of Wm. Douglas & Co. for 40 pounds sterling.

A proclamation from Francis Wyatt, Governor, is recorded, concerning the shipping of Tobacco, none allowed to be shipped without examination, much loss having occurred the year before from dishonest people mixing new & old. Shipmasters also had to give an account of the number of Hogsheads received. The order is dated at James City, *Feb. 20th, 1640.* Another

Proclamation dated June 25th, 1641, forbids the planting of more than 1000 Plants, by each planter. The cultivation of Tobacco hindering the planting and sowing of corn & other good works. Shippers were also bound to take no Tobacco except from the warehouses provided. An order was made that no person should leave his house or plantation without arms & ammunition. John Neale sold 500 acres of land on bay side to Edmund Scarborough for ten pounds sterling in 1642.

1643. An order came from Sir Wm. Berkeley appointing Capt. Francis Yardley commander of the troops in Accomack, given orders about training & etc.—his bounds were from the lower side of Hungar's to King's Creek & all along the Bay—also orders establishing the County Courts of Northampton County. It took the name 1642.

July 28th, 1642. First Court under new name. A certificate was granted unto Wm. Waters, son & heir of Lt. Edward Waters, in which it is stated that three men were killed at the massacre & four men & a maid were cast away in the Bay. Mr. Taylor was empowered to take a company of men, & ammunition & go to an Indian Town named or called Ginguhcloust, to do what they think best for the welfare of this county.

Jan. 30, 1642. George Ludlow conveys by a bill of sale a Horse to Argall Yardly—this is the first mention of a horse. The troubles in England first noticed in a letter from Wm. Webb, which was directed to Thos. Noke & Andrew White, of Md. This White writes that they were in great fear of Turmoils & Convulsions, and wishes he was in the Colony. The Court's excuse for breaking the seals of the letter is that from information they understood these letters did contain information of the State of England, and also of this Colony, and whereas the times do seem perilous the seals were ordered to be broken, but finding no matter in them, they were ordered to be sent to the place to which they were directed.

Will of Wm. Burdett recorded 1643. He left 5 lbs. to the lower parish to purchase a communion cup & plate. Philip Taylor, sheriff, petitions for a jail to be built. Aug., 1643, trial of Parks for slandering Yardley & etc. At the request of Wm. Andrews it was ordered that no man should truck or trade with his negro man John.

April, 1644. It was ordered that for the better protection of the Inhabitants they should be under commands in each precinct. From the north side of Nassawattocks to the North side of Hungar's they were to be under the command of Wm. Andrews & Stephen Charlton, and all the Inhabitants between the south side of Hungar's to the north of Mattawaman Creek, were to submit unto Capt. Wm. Stone. And from Mattawaman Creek to Thos. Dimmer's House under Argall Yeardley. From Francis Petits house & both sides of Cherriston Creek under Obedience Robins & Philip Taylor. From King's Creek to the house of Edward Douglas under Wm. Roper & Edward Douglas, and from Mr. Littleton's to Magotha Bay point under John Neale & Edmund Scarborough. Any persons refractory to these orders were to be committed to the custody of the sheriff to be sent to James City. July 12th, 1644, John Wise testifies as a witness.

Inventory & appraisement of the estate of Wm. Burdett, one of the court and burgess who died about 1642-3-4, some idea may be obtained how people lived about that time. There were beds, Valances, Blankets & sheets. Pewter dishes of all kinds. Iron kettles & pots of all descriptions. No crockery or any of the present material of kitchen furniture, all is pewter, Iron, or brass, or plate. There were two silver salts—1 wine cup & 1 doz. silver spoons—11 oxen—18 or 20 steers—many cows & calves—22 goats—no horses mentioned. 8 servants with various times to serve & 2 negros.

1645. Feather beds & Holland sheets are mentioned; also the vessel called the Blessing of Virginia. Stephen Charlton buys two pipes of wine of Peter —— of the Water Duck of Rotterdam at £22 Sterling in Tobacco at 3 pence per lb.

7th November, 1645. Court accepts the offer of John Badlam, & John Dixon of the Point House, which they inhabit and keep an ordinary at the old Plantation Creek, should be the common prison, and they appointed to keep & feed the prisoners. Mention of horses that died on passage from New England. Custom was begun of recording the branding of cattle.

Decb'r, 1646. Will of Wm. Cotton, clerk, recorded his plantation, was called Bunbury—evidently after Bunbury, Cheshire,

Eng., where he came from. This was Cotton, the minister. Hugh Yeo appears as a merchant.

Feb., 1646. Richard Buckland, who had defamed Ann Smyth by the publication of a libel in the form of poetry, "shall the next sermon that is preached at Nussawattocks, stand at the Church door from the beginning of the 1st lesson untill the 2nd be ended with a paper upon his hat, & on it shall be written in capital letters Inimrius Libellos, desireing forgiveness of God & also in particular the aforesaid defamed," & etc.

March 22nd, 1646. Walter Williams licensed to keep an ordinary & victualling house, & "to sell strong water." Mention of next Court at house of Stephen Charlton.

1647. Francis Pott has two negro children bound to him for a term of years, & he binds himself to furnish them sufficient meat & drink & apparel & lodging, & to use his best endeavours to bring them up in the fear of God & in the knowledge of our Saviour Jesus Christ. The name of the negro from whom he bought them was Immanuel Driggus or Driggs—he was a servant to Francis Potts. Books mentioned. Bible without the Psalms. Dr. Wm. Smith's sermons, & the Practice of Piety. An order made at June Court, 1647, for the constables in the different precincts to visit the planters farms & see if they have planted as much Corn as directed by act of Assembly. Among charges ag^t estate of Richard Leman for the funeral is an Ox, 800 lbs. Tobacco, also 1 Case of Drams at 200 lbs. Tobacco. The coffin 100 lbs. Tobacco—paid Wm. Carter for dressing dinner 100 lbs. tobacco—for making the grave 40 lbs. Tobacco.

June 29th, 1646. Mention of the settlement of partnership business between Capt. Wm. Clayborne & Geo. Fletcher, merchant. Disbursed by the account 12000 lbs. Toboe for the trade of Susquehanna & for the Isle of Kent in making peace, taking possession of it, fortifying & maintaining it, of which Mr. Fletcher's letter engages him to bear his share, this was about 1642 & 3. Accounts were submitted for arbitration to Mr. Richard Bennett & Peter, Knights, of Warrosquack. James Fletcher was of Eltham, County of Kent, England, and was atty. for his brother Geo. Fletcher, merchant, of London. Wheat & Flour first mentioned about this time in a bill of Capt. Wormley's. In 1646 one item is two runlets of beer while the

Governor was at his house. Orders for bridges across Hungar's & other creeks about this time.

Nov., 1648. Robt. Warder was ordered to stand at the Church door at Nassawattocks with a great pot tyed about his neck, thereby signifying the merit of his offence for being drunk, & etc.

At a Court held May 16th, 1649, Ordered next court to be held at the house of Walter Williams at Nassawattocks, & the ensuing court at the Point house on the old Plantation Creek & so successively & that any Justice being absent should be fined 300 lbs. tobacco according to act of Assembly. Owing to the alarming condition of the county the Inhabitants were ordered to carry their arms & ammunition to Church & Court, or whenever they left their houses. Mention of a man defending himself with a truncheon in a tavern brawl.

A proclamation by the Court & Commissioners of Accomacke: Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God, to be deprived of our late dread Sovereign of Blessed Memory, We, the Court & Commissioners of Accomacke, Do by these present proclaims Charles the undoubted Heir of one of our late Sovereign of blessed memory, To be King of England, Scotland, France, Ireland and Virginia, and all other remote provinces and Colonies, New England and the Caribder Islands and all other hereditaments & indowments belonging to our late sovereign of blessed memory, Willing & requiring all his majesties high (?) people to acknowledge their allegiance, and with general consent and applause, pray God to bless Charles the second, King of England, Scotland, France, Ireland, Virginia, New England, the Caribder Islands and all other provinces & subjects to the English Crown. And so God save King Charles the second. Amen, Amen, Amen (page, 193, Book 3).

April, 1650. Sir Wm. Berkely writes, "Gen" Having been frequently informed by the testimony of divers, of undeniable credit, that the Indians commonly called by the name of the Laughing Kinge Indians, have been most faithful to the English, and especially that neither they nor their King in the last bloody massacre could be induced to engage with our enemies against us & so by consequence kept the remote Indians, at least none broke in at a time when a general combination against us, had

been if not ruinous, at least of insupportable expense to us, and considering that we cannot reasonably for the like effect of their friendship, in case we should again need it (which God knows how soon it may be) unless we correspond with them in acts of charity and amity, Especially unless we abstain from acts rapine & violence, which they say we begin to do, by taking away their land from them, by pretence of the sale of a patent. My desire therefore to you is and I make it in the name of the peace & safety of the Colony, that you suffer no land to be taken from them but what shall be allowed both in justice & convenience by the full court. And in case the commissioners disagree in their opinion, that you refer the whole matter to be considered by a full court at James City.

“Your humble servant,

“WM. BERKELY.

“The Commissioners of Northampton County there.”

A council of war was held 25th July, 1650. When from the depositions of Robt. Berry, who was told by an Indian named Ornaws that the Indians were not good, that King Tom of the Gingasgoynes told the other English what the Indians said & did, That they were appointed to poison the English. This deponent said he did not believe it, because the Bay side Indians sold all their Corn, he said (the Indian said) they sold their corn for truck to pay the Indians that were to come over the Bay, whom they had hired to fight against the English. The court gave orders for the Inhabitants to stand upon their arms & etc. Two negroes were examined, one of them testified that King Tom carried Roanoke unto the Nanticoke King, said Roanoke was for bribing, that he might have the Indians all as one, that the King of Gingategue and the King of Matchategue intended to fall upon the English, that they had all consulted together, except the King of Kikotank. At a Court held the same month Robt. Berry's deposition was taken over again. A party of able men were ordered to go among the Indians and make inquiries.

Mention of sassafras root shipped to England 3000 weight, worth 20 shillings per cwt.—also some old brass and pewter. Books mentioned in an Inventory—“The Turkish History”—

“Stowe’s Chronicles” & “the King’s Meditation.” An order is made upon complaint forbidding the Dutch from that time should no longer trade, truck or barter with the Indians for fur or other skins, under a fine of 500 lbs. Tobacco. It was said their concern with the Indians was perilous to the Inhabitants.

An account of a council of war held at James City is recorded at this time. It was to try Edmund Scarborough & Thos. Johnson for going in a hostile manner upon the Indians and doing them outrages, but upon scanning the business, it was found to be untrue, and the court considered that they acted as careful and honest men ought to have done.

“Whereas there is a great probability that the Indians have concluded a confederancy of acting a sudden massacre of the inhabitants of this county, It is therefore provided that a company or police of Horse shall be pressed for present service to discover and prevent the threatened danger, and that no delay be used. These are in his Majesties name to authorize the officers employed to press such horses, men and other necessities as fitly conduce to the execution of this design and hereunto let no man fail of observing as he or they will answer to the court at their peril. This is signed by Stephen Charlton, Edmund Scarborough, Thos. Johnson, and then follows a letter from Col. Littleton:

“Gent. I have received your order & I think it fitting that you all meet at Mr. Charlton’s upon the 31st of this month and thereunto give Mr. Andrews & Mr. Yardley notice of your meeting, and what you shall there agree for the Good & safety of the County, I do willingly condescend to. I pray you be careful not to engage us in a war but upon good grounds (some other words not intelligible).

“Your friend,

“NATH’L LITTLETON.”